

Remarks

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 11-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by German Patent Document 20007930 U1 which corresponds to U.S. Patent No. 6,447,005 to Alb et al. ("Alb").

Claims 11-12 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a vehicle interior lining assembly for a roof frame, said assembly comprising, a vehicle interior lining, and a gas bag module fastened to said vehicle interior lining, said gas bag module having a gas bag which in a state installed in a vehicle extends substantially from an A-column of said vehicle to a C-column of said vehicle, said vehicle interior lining being comprised of at least two vehicle interior lining pieces, said vehicle interior lining pieces and said gas bag module being attached together by first fasteners to form a preassembled unit, said at least two vehicle interior lining pieces and portions of said gas bag module being displaceable in a longitudinal direction of said vehicle interior lining pieces with respect to each other to align and position said vehicle interior lining pieces and said gas bag module in said vehicle, and second fasteners provided for securing said vehicle interior lining to the vehicle thereby fastening said gas bag module to the vehicle.

Alb does not disclose a vehicle interior lining being comprised of at least two vehicle interior lining pieces, said at least two vehicle interior lining pieces and a gas bag module being displaceable in a longitudinal direction of said vehicle interior lining pieces with respect to each other to align and position said vehicle interior lining and said gas bag module in said vehicle, as recited in claim 1. In Alb, the ejection channels 12 and 14 can only be displaced in a longitudinal direction with respect to each other before the cover 20 is attached. That is, once the gas bag module 5 is assembled, the ejection channels 12 and 14 can no longer move in a longitudinal direction with respect to each other without deforming cover 20. Further, if ejection channels 12 and 14 are moved longitudinally with respect to each other before assembly, projections 22 would not be aligned with the holes in the cover 20. Therefore, in Alb, once the gas bad module 5 is assembled, the ejection channels cannot be displaced in a longitudinal direction to align and position the gas bag module with a vehicle.

Additionally, Alb does not disclose second fasteners provided for securing a vehicle interior lining to a vehicle, as recited in claim 1. In Alb, two projections 22 are disclosed. Alb does not disclose that projections 22 can be employed to secure gas bag module 5 to a vehicle. Accordingly, Alb does not disclose the structure of claim 1.

Claims 2-5 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are allowable for substantially the same reasons as claim 1 and for the specific

limitations recited therein. Accordingly, allowance of claims 2-5 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 9-10 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,234,517 to Miyahara et al. ("Miyahara").

Miyahara does not disclose a vehicle interior lining being comprised of at least two vehicle interior lining pieces, said at least two vehicle interior lining pieces and a gas bag module being displaceable in a longitudinal direction of said vehicle interior lining pieces with respect to each other to align and position said vehicle interior lining and said gas bag module in said vehicle, as recited in claim 1. When the air bag apparatus is being installed in Miyahara, cover parts 15 and 16 are not displaceable in a longitudinal direction relative to each other to align and position vehicle interior pieces and said gas bad module in a vehicle, as recited in claim 1. In fact, in Miyahara, if the cover parts 15 and 16 are moved in a longitudinal direction with respect to each other before installation, the air bag apparatus would not be able to be mounted on pad 10 because holes 17a and 38 would no longer be aligned. Accordingly, Miyahara does not disclose the structure of claim 1.

In fact, no prior art discloses the structure of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable.

Claim 9 is similar to claim 1. As stated above with respect to claim 1, Miyahara does not disclose a vehicle interior lining comprising at

least two vehicle interior lining pieces that are displaceable in a longitudinal direction with respect to each other to align and position the vehicle interior lining in a vehicle, as recited in claim 9. Additionally, Miyahara does not disclose two vehicle interior lining pieces having opposing, longitudinal ends, which when installed in a vehicle and viewed in the direction of a longitudinal axis of said vehicle interior pieces, are spaced apart from each other, as recited in claim 9. As shown in Fig. 1 of Miyahara, cover parts 15 and 16 overlap each other to align mounting holes 17a and 38. Thus, the cover parts 15 and 16 are not spaced apart from each other. Accordingly, Miyahara does not disclose the structure of claim 9 and thus, claim 9 is allowable.

Claim 10 is similar to claim 1 and is allowable for substantially the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, allowance of claim 10 is respectfully requested.

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,234,517 to Miyahara et al. ("Miyahara") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,788,270 to HÅland, et al. ("Haland").

Claim 6 depends from claim 5 and is allowable for the same reasons as claim 5 and for the specific limitations recited therein. The addition of Haland does not cure the deficiencies of Miyahara, as the combination of Haland and Miyahara fails to disclose or suggest at least two vehicle interior lining pieces and portions of a gas bag module being displaceable

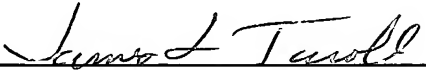
in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle interior lining pieces with respect to each other to align and position said vehicle interior lining pieces and said gas bag module in a vehicle, as recited in claim 1, from which claim 6 depends. Accordingly, since neither reference discloses the invention of claim 6, a combination of the references does not make claim 6 obvious. Thus, claim 6 should be allowed.

Allowance of claims 13-16 is acknowledged.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees
for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,


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